

HOUSE RESOLUTION 196
By Odom

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Joseph Gower Mills for his meritorious service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedoms, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, an effective system of correction is fundamental to a just society, and any such system necessitates the service of individuals of the utmost ability and character; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Gower Mills is one such estimable officer who has earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues and superiors alike during his eight years with the Tennessee Department of Correction at Middle Tennessee Reception Center and at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution; and

WHEREAS, Corporal Mills has performed his duties with acumen and alacrity and has twice been honored as "Employee of the Month"; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his professional excellence, he has shown laudable compassion for, and dedication to, the well-being of his coworkers, friends, and even strangers; and

WHEREAS, in December of 1998, he learned of the plight of a West Tennessee correctional family who had lost their home to fire; immediately, he sprung into action and devoted his entire vacation to acquiring aid for the family; and

WHEREAS, due to Corporal Mills' efforts, more than \$1,000 in assistance was raised from nine states and Canada in only a few short days; and

WHEREAS, supplementing this financial aid with gifts donated by local businesses or bought with his personal funds, he helped to ensure that a Christmas the McKenzie family will never forget would be a more positive memory for them; for his efforts, the most grateful family dubbed him their personal Santa; and

WHEREAS, since that time, he had remained active in the service of his fellow man; working closely with the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation, he has helped to provide needy families with nearly \$4,000 in aid; and

WHEREAS, his efforts have brought much needed relief to families that have been stricken with disaster, disease, accidental injury, or the loss of a loved one; and

WHEREAS, this exceptional humanitarian also took classes at the Nashville Chapter of the American Red Cross so that he would be prepared to help should disaster strike his community, his state, or his nation; and

WHEREAS, due to the tragic events of September 11, 2001, he was called into action; he flew to New York and worked in downtown Manhattan, providing much-needed assistance to the workers at Ground Zero; and

WHEREAS, his professional and community endeavors aside, Joseph Gower Mills is most grateful for the loving companionship he shares with his wife, Barbara; and

WHEREAS, he follows in an estimable family tradition of dedication to family and community; he is descended from James Robertson, the "Father of Tennessee," and a founder of Nashville; Gower Road in West Nashville and Gower Elementary School were named in honor of Corporal Mills' family; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Gower Mills is a fitting heir to such an exalted heritage; he has served with courage and gallantry and deserves proper recognition for heroism both in the Tennessee Department of Correction and in society today; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor and commend Joseph Gower Mills of Nashville for his meritorious service to the Tennessee Department of Correction and offer our deepest thanks for his admirable dedication to his fellow citizen beyond the call of duty.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.